

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

An Office Action dated September 25, 2003 was erroneously sent to one of the inventors of this application. In the letter dated October 17, 2003, this error was brought to the attention of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and a request was made to re-issue the Office Action.

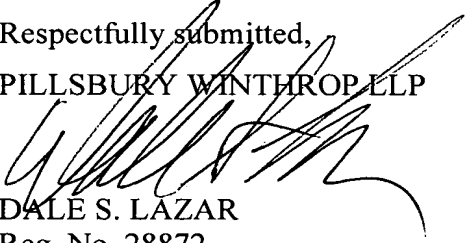
When no response from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office was received by the December 25, 2003 deadline for responding to the September 25, 2003 Office Action, an Amendment was filed on December 23, 2003.

The current Office Action in this application, dated December 31, 2003, appears to be identical to the September 25, 2003 Office Action, and was presumably in response to our letter of October 17, 2003 requesting re-issuance of the Office Action. Our Amendment filed December 23, 2003 is fully responsive to the Office Action dated December 31, 2003.

In view of the above, it is believed this application is in condition for allowance, and such a Notice is respectfully solicited.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,
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